Dear Jon. I don't have the address. Would you please forward? Thanks.

Editor, Rolling Stone,

7/21/74

I hear you have commissioned Robert Blair Kaiser to do a piece on Conspiracy Theories in the JFK assassination. This will be another of your contributions, whether or not so intended, to the Department of Disinformation. You and he did it earlier by dignifying a non-event with a non-report, giving significance it did not have to the public abortion of the so-called "Committee to Investigate Assassinations." It's Georgetown exorcism of last November.

You may not share my view, that the JFK assassination is a turning-point of modern history. Much as we do not know about it, we do know that national policy and direction changed with it. Do you believe LBJ or RMN could have been President without it? Or, it is much too significant an event for the kind of attention the nuttery of the dedicated wrong have been given by the alternative press.

Editors necessarily trust those who write for them. They thereby become the creatures of writers if they are without basis for discrimination. In printing Kaiser's earlier piece you lacked discrimination and displayed a lack of knowledge which could be the basis for it.

If this were a responsible treatment of a serious subject, and it can't be, there would be the question what qualifies Kaiser? His writing a book on Sirhan? What has that to do(except that in a generally good work he displayed an inadequacy for the role he had undertaken) with the JFK assassination? Or his knowledge of those who work in the field or who pretend to? Or his inability or unwillingness - take your choice- to distinguish between the two?

A mythology has been fabricated about this assassination, assassinations in general and the intelligence agencies. Those who made it up know nothing about spooks or spookeries. The few who have contaminated themselves with a little fact do not let it intrude upon passions, anxieties or preconceptions. There are a few unscrupulous among them but most are fine, concerned people who just happen to be nuts on these subjects and also happen to be sincere. Sincerity of belief did not make the world flat.

Those who would undertake to inform people, especially the very fine new generation of young, owe a responsibility not to misinform. Intent is irrelevant, fact is relevant. This subject can't be treated responsibly and if it could be Kaiser is not about to start doing the work required for the effort - before he could write a word.

We may not like the realities of modern life but that does not keep them from being realities and the realities. All the crappy writing that when it is best motivated is merely wrong finds its ways into files for extraction and confidential display any time anyone in a position to be of some influence opens his mouth or gives a sign. On the other extreme there is a Skolnick who would be more respectable if he were certified insane. He serves CIA and does work for it that it can't do for itself, making official connection another irrelevancy. If there is an exception to his acceptence in the alternative media I don't know it. And his awful stuff is so bad it requires no specific knowledge for disbelief [illegible] talking about. Because of these deficiencies he doesn't care. He'll give Kaiser and you plenty of theories and neither of you will know whether the one he gives refutes others he has propagandized. This is the regard in which you hold your readers? Or your responsibilities?

There is decent, responsible writing that can be done. But not by those who can't separate appetite and asshole.

This fine new generation does want to know what truth can be known. But what do they get? A mafia of commercializers who take their money and give them fairy tales. These are characters who merely take the work of others - the crazier the better - and improvise on it. There is nothing too insane. They call themselves "researchers" because they are undiscriminating plagiarists, so they have read something, generally worthless when it is not worse. Then they improvise upon each other. By the time this cycle is through a college year there is no work left for the black artists.

What do they read? Or what is available to them? What have those of means done to make truth as it can be authenticated available to the young in quest of knowledge? Fed them Skolnick! And the countless others like him who differ only in being unable to equal his lack of scruple and can't approximate his ability to manufacture evidence with a single flick of the forked tongue. No others get in print.

Most people get their news from the Establishmentarian media. They, these editors, begin with prejudice against truth. What more do they need to fortify this prejudice than the unending insane stuff that crosses their desks from the alternative media?

And because all this rotten writing is insane they assume that there is no other writing, that it is all insane.

So whose interest does this miserable puke serve?

The spooks sponsor this kind of sick stuff. It makes them credible as they cannot do for themselves.

If you can't find another Julie Cameron to do the kind of beautiful, responsible writing she did on the Hunt children, can't you please stay away from these subjects where you can't do good and inevitably will do harm?

They are not subjects for trivial writing or juvenile writers.

They are not subjects on which you should abuse the trust of your readers.

Were I not certain I'd not be taking the time to write you. That I do take this time I hope you will understand to be an indication of the respect I have for some of the fine things you have done and a belief that you do not really want to do what will be inevitable in this project.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg